

FLIGHT JACKET

Vol. 6, No. 23

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

June 11, 2004

"Some people live their entire lifetime and wonder if they have ever made a difference in the world, but the Marines don't have that problem."

1911 **RONALD REAGAN** 2004

Miramar honors 40th commander in chief

Story compiled by CPAO

NAVAL BASE VENTURA COUNTY, PT. MUGU, Calif. - Members of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar played a ceremonious part in the journey of former President Ronald Reagan to his final resting place.

The president, who passed away June 5 at the age of 93, was driven here from the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, Calif., Wednesday for a flight to Andrews Air Force Base, Washington, for a full state funeral - the first since President Lynden Johnson's in 1973.

Before Reagan's 600-pound casket was loaded onto a twin Air Force One aircraft heading to Washington for a nighttime ceremony at the Capitol Rotunda, 37 3rd MAW and three 1st Marine Division Band members performed "Amazing Grace" at the president and his wife, Nancy's, request.

Master Gunnery Sgt. Steven R. Schweitzer, 1st MarDiv Band bandmaster, said playing a part in the president's procession is surreal.

"The plane is here to take our president back to our nation's capital, and we are here honoring him. I am filled with a tremendous sense of pride," added the ceremony's clarinet player.

It is a very honoring experience, said 3rd MAW Band saxophone player Sgt. Scott Anderson, and "I am really excited to partake in the ceremony."

The body remained in state until the national funeral today at the Washington National Cathedral, where President George W. Bush delivered the eulogy. The president's body will then be flown back to the West Coast for a private burial service at the Reagan library.

"Not everyone gets a chance to do something like this, and I am really proud to be part of it," added Anderson, a Phoenix native.

Lance Cpl. Quentin Papenhausen, a Marine Corps Body Bearer from Marine Barracks 8th and I, Washington, and member of the



President Ronald Reagan, along with the first lady, Nancy, wave to well wishers as a Marine from Marine Helicopter Squadron 1 prepares to escort the president off Marine One. *Official DoD photo*

Reagan's presidency and legacy

Reagan accepts Republican nomination for president	JULY 17 1980
Inaugurated as 40th president. On the same day, Iran releases 52 remaining hostages held at U.S. Embassy in Tehran	JAN 20 1981
John W. Hinckley Jr. attempts to assassinate the president	MARCH 30 1981
Reagan delivers a speech in front of British Parliament predicting ultimate triumph of freedom over communism	JUNE 8 1982
Suicide truck bomber kills 241 U.S. servicemembers in Beirut, Lebanon	OCT 23 1983
Reagan delivers a speech in Pointe de Huc, Normandy, commemorating the 40th anniversary of D-Day	JUNE 6 1984
Reagan re-elected	NOV 6 1984
U.S. space shuttle Challenger explodes, Reagan calls the tragedy "a national loss"	JAN 28 1986
Reagan, in a speech at the Brandenburg Gate in West Berlin, challenges Gorbachev to "open this gate ... tear down this wall!"	JUNE 12 1987
Gives farewell address	JAN 11 1989
The Berlin Wall, physically separating East Germany from West Germany opens	NOV 9 1989

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Weekend forecast from Miramar's weather station



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New methods to speed overseas absentee balloting

Story by Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON - Absentee ballots from servicemembers overseas will move faster and with greater control for the 2004 elections, DoD and U.S. Postal Service officials said recently.

Charles S. Abell, principal deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, and Paul Vogel, the Postal Service's vice president for network operations management, discussed the changes made in the absentee balloting process for 2004.

"We've had a year of getting ready for the upcoming federal election, focusing on how we can help military personnel, their families and civilians overseas to exercise their right to vote," Abell said during a Pentagon interview. "As we have looked at ev-

ery sort of situation, problem and impediment and tried to resolve them, we have come to another resolution to help us move ballots and ballot request materials from the hand of the overseas soldier, Sailor, airman, Marine or family member to their county boards of elections."

Vogel said the DoD/USPS team has put together a process that will expedite the overseas absentee balloting mail flow and give greater accountability. The Postal Service has no special program in place for servicemembers voting absentee in the United States.

"The Postal Service does a great job within the United States," Abell said. "Our problem has always been more with the overseas voters."

Essentially, the Postal Service will ask local postmasters to contact the officials in counties that are responsible for mailing bal-

lots and to whom completed ballots are returned.

"Traditionally, 30 to 45 days in advance of the elections, the blank ballots will be mailed out from those counties," Vogel said.

The Postal Service is asking county officials to hold out military ballots. Local postmasters will take those ballots and sort them for three different destinations: San Francisco for servicemembers based around the Pacific Rim, New York for Europe and the Middle East and Miami for Central and South America.

The balloting materials will go to those destinations via the Postal Service's Express Mail service, Vogel said. Once at these military mail "gateways," Postal Service managers will log in the Express Mail pieces and sort them to the different military ZIP codes.

In theater, military postal officials will ensure balloting materials are again given

priority as they travel to the servicemember. Once servicemembers vote, the reverse process is the same - balloting materials receive priority, and ballots are placed in specially marked trays. One change, however, is that when ballots are received at the APO or FPO, mail clerks will put postal cancellation marks on the envelopes.

This gives an accurate measure of the date and time a ballot is received.

At the postal gateways, ballots will go back into the normal mail flow in the United States that allows for a three-day delivery, Vogel said.

Traditionally, military members and their families vote at a higher percentage than the general population.

All administrations have encouraged military members to exercise their rights to vote. "We don't care how they vote, just so long as they do," Abell said.

Battle of Midway remembered

June marks 62nd anniversary of pivotal World War II victory

Story by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Sixty-two years ago, Sailors and Marines of the U.S. Pacific Fleet surprised and defeated Japan's combined fleet near the Pacific atoll of Midway.

As this month also marks the 60th anniversary of the invasion of Normandy, the memory of Midway may seem overshadowed by America's victories in Europe, but the military and historical significance of the Battle of Midway cannot be overstated.

The Battle of Midway is considered by many to be the pivotal battle in the Pacific Theater during World War II. Some, including historian James Schlesinger, see Midway as the primary reason the United States was able to focus on defeating Nazi Germany in Europe as part of the Allies' grand strategy.

In the aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941, the Japanese captured several key strategic islands in the Pacific before pursuing territories further east toward the coast of the United States in late May and June of 1942.

As the world watched the fall of the Philippines, the Malay Peninsula, Singapore and the Dutch East Indies in the Pacific, the Japanese were proving to be unstoppable in the face of a weakened American military.

It was at Midway where the U.S. Pacific Fleet - with inferior aircraft, ineffective torpedoes and a lack of supporting American surface ships - took on a numerically superior Japanese force and emerged



Seen on board *USS Yorktown* shortly after she was hit by three Japanese bombs June 4, 1942. The dense smoke is from the fires in her uptakes caused by a bomb that punctured them and punctured her boilers. *Official Navy photo*

victorious in the face of overwhelming odds.

The centerpiece of Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto's force sent to Midway were four carriers that launched the air attack on Pearl Harbor: Akagi, Kaga, Soryu and Hiryu.

Previously, U.S. Pacific Fleet carriers were not in port during the attack at Pearl Harbor and had escaped destruction, keeping America's Naval aviation assests ready to strike back at the Japanese.

Midway proved to be America's opportunity for some payback.

Thanks to the efforts of American cryptologists, Japanese codes were deciphered, and it was learned that "AF", code for Midway, would soon be the next target of Japan's imperial aggression.

See MIDWAY, page 8

MIRAMARKS

"What do you remember about President Reagan?"



GUNNERY SGT. BRIAN RICHARDSON
Maintenance SNCOIC
MACS-1

"He helped turn the nation around during the Cold War and gave us a feeling of security."

ANDREW GILMOUR
Employee
Navy Federal Credit Union

"He was a good president and a great supporter of the military."



PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS ROBERT COE
Machinists Mate
SWRMC

"He was a positive influence and was very generous to the military."



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Commander MCABWA
Commanding General
MCAS Miramar



MAJ. GEN. KEITH J. STALDER
Commanding General
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

MAJ. CURTIS HILL
Public Affairs Director 3rd MAF Forward

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Staff Sgt. A.C. Mink
Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte

Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III
Forward Deployed

Communicators dial in to training

MWCS-38 Marines prepare for Exercise Desert Talon, future Operation Iraqi Freedom deployments

Story by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Marines with Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 took to the field June 3 to prepare for operational deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Demonstrating their ability to provide superior communication support, a company of Marines set up field radio equipment and practiced radio procedures while in the field to maintain its operational proficiency and war fighting readiness.

“Today we are setting up high frequency radios so we can train for long distance communications between units in Iraq,” said 1st Lt. M. Christian Chandler, Bravo Company platoon commander, MWCS-38.

“We’re slated to replace Alpha Company who is currently operating in Iraq this August, and by coming out here to East Miramar the Marines have a chance to train in the field.

“There are also a few Marines here who just completed their (Military Occupation Specialty) school, so for them it’s a great experience.”

Chandler added that in addition to setting up high frequency field radios such as the vehicular AN/MRC-138, his platoon trains with smaller VHF radios, including the PRC-119.

“The 138 is typically used for receiving and transmitting messages hundreds of miles away,” explained Chandler. “Our 145s, which are basically PRC-119s on steroids, are normally used for convoy operations on shorter distances.

“In Iraq we will be handling communications to and from Marines at larger air bases such as Al Asad and (Forward Arming and Refueling Points), so it’s important that we train to maintain a high operational tempo for real situations as much as we can before we deploy to support fellow Marines,” added the Tusin, Calif., native.

During the field training, Bravo Company’s Marines were broken down into teams to further hone their communications skills.

“Our newest Marines will benefit most from this training, but all of us, even the more veteran Marines, have something to teach as well as learn out here,” said Sgt. Christopher R. Duke, radio noncommissioned officer, MWCS-38, as he supervised a small group of Bravo Company Marines.

“Right now the Marines in this team are practicing sending and receiving a S.A.L.U.T.E. message,” he added.

While giving a class on proper radio procedures using the PRC-119, Duke outlined how to fill out a canary sheet. The canary sheet is radio message log on yellow paper that defines a large amount of detailed information pertaining to a

message’s priority, time, date, sender, location, etc.

“Some messages are more immediate, while some are priority or routine,” said Lance Cpl. Mark Klinger, radio operator, MWCS-38.

“This will be my second deployment to Iraq, and this type of predeployment field training, in addition to Desert Talon, will really help out the newer Marines in our unit.”



Sgt. Christopher Duke, radio noncommissioned officer, MWCS-38, supervises a team of Marines practicing radio procedures during predeployment field training on East Miramar June 3. Photo by Cpl. Paul Leicht

On second thought ...

Goodbye Mr. President

Capt. Michael J. Friel

Public Affairs director

“Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate... Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” President Reagan had been pressuring his Cold War adversary for years leading to those remarks at the backdrop of conflict between two global superpowers.

President Reagan wanted to confront the Soviet leader at the gate that separated socialist east from free nations in the west. Although advised against those strong words, Reagan knew in his heart it was the right moment to issue his searing challenge. Two years after those remarks at the Berlin Wall, Secretary Gorbachev released his grip over Eastern Europe, and later accepted the divorce of his Soviet Union.

Of course, President Reagan had a way with his fellow Americans as he worked to revive our

See **REAGAN**, page 9

Taking Chance

Editors note: This is the second of a four-part series featuring a memoir written by Lt. Col. Mike Strobl, who was assigned to escort the remains of Pfc. Chance Phelps, a casualty of Operation Iraqi Freedom, to his hometown in Debois, Wyo.

On the tarmac, the cargo crew was silent except for occasional instructions to each other. I stood to the

See **CHANCE**, page 11

Send your letters or opinions to the Flight Jacket editor. Include your name, rank and unit, and send to: mcmeence@miramar.usmc.mil.

Marines fight for MCMAP gray belts

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

A Spartan boy was taken away from his parents at the tender age of 7 to start his “agoge,” which would prepare him for military training. That is, if he made it to that age.

At birth, a Spartan boy was washed in wine to determine if he was strong enough to go onto the agoge. If he threw a fit, he proved his potency and was salvaged. However, he was taken away from his mother, and a nurse raised him with little affection until he turned 7. He was then forced to move out of his home and into callous barracks to become a soldier. He would stay with the other boys at the quarters until he reached 30.

The training was atrocious. Statue did not matter, and the older children would start fights with the younger Spartans to make them stronger. The Spartans were taught various techniques that won them several competitions and wars.

Though times have changed since 600 B.C., the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program bears a similar resemblance to several training techniques of the Spartans.

Devil dogs from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 trained to get their gray belts May 17-21. The class consisted of 10 Marines and four instructors.

Staff Sgt. Tungi A. Mills, aviation ordnance technician, MALS-16, and green belt instructor, said MCMAP instills a sense of self-confidence in Marines.

“If they ever end up in a situation where they have to defend themselves they will know how to handle it properly,” added the Tuscaloosa, Ala., native.



A Marine executes a fireman's carry in his combat conditioning drill portion of MCMAP training.
Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

Before their vicious “agoge” began, the Marines stretched out their muscles to prepare for the inevitable. Then they performed strengthening exercises to build up their stamina. After working up a slight sweat, they partook in body hardening drills.

“Body hardening is not meant to toughen anything,” said Cpl. Bryan D. Cantrell, aviation mechanic, MALS-16.

“Its main purpose is to expose the Marine to what it would feel like if they were hit in a specific area,” added the green belt instructor.

After body hardening the Marines underwent physically straining combat conditioning such as running. On the third day of training the Marines did an obstacle course including conditioning exercises as the fireman's carry, buddy bear crawl, squats, body builders and stand up sit ups, all while running in between each station.

After conditioning, the Marines went over martial arts moves for the tan and gray belt. They learned body strikes, chokes, knife and bayonet techniques and a wide array of other pertinent moves.

“These moves could save your life if you ever end up in a hostile territory,” stated Pfc. Randall G. Cole, engine mechanic, MALS-16.

“The instructors are very patient, and they break everything down so you can actually learn the move. In boot camp I felt that they didn't break up the moves, but here it is easily one on one with the instructors. You actually learn all of the moves here,” continued the Gadsden, Ala., native.

On some of the training days, the Marines would engage in body sparring and grappling.

See **MCMAP**, page 9

Honoring a generation of heroes

Story by Cpl. Brian Buckwalter

HQMC Combat Correspondent

Just between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial lies a bronze and granite tribute to a generation where 16 million served in America's armed forces. No longer is World War II a mere fading memory in the minds of those fading fast.

On May 29, President George W. Bush officially dedicated the World War II Memorial - one many veterans of that war thought they would never live to see.

"It's only been 60 years," said Lionel Spencer who served as Marine corporal during the war.

Even though most commented on the absence of a World War II memorial until now, all were appreciative.

"It means so much to me. We're getting away fast," said Olin Drummond a sergeant who served with the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. "We buried two last Saturday who wanted to be here."

They are just two of more than a thousand World War II veterans who die every day. Only five million are still living. The youngest are in their 80s. Those still alive think about those who didn't make it home.

"Every time I hear a bugle play 'Taps' it still breaks me up," said Ed Blackburn who served as an Army staff sergeant in the 102nd Infantry Division during the war.

No sooner than he said that, a lone bugle in the distance began the simple but moving notes of that very song. His frail body, which still carried a strong handshake, slowly rose to the position of attention. Tears streamed down his face.

Many emotional moments were shared with family, fellow servicemembers and complete strangers as veterans remembered lives lost, but the largest reunion of World War II veterans in history was not just about those not there.

One of the main reasons Spencer traveled from his home

in San Diego was "to see this collection of old fellas. They are marvelous."

"Some of them are pretty slow, but they're still moving," said retired Marine Col. Dean Esslinger of Richmond, Va. At least "they're looking at the grass and not under it."

Dave Taylor came with his father-in-law who fought in the famous Battle of the Bulge. He was humbled by how the veterans looked out for each other. He said they were helping each other to their seats at the dedication ceremony, asking, "Do you have enough water," and making sure people were comfortable.

The ceremony was "very upbeat," he said. His comment echoed the president's.

"Raising up this memorial took skill and vision and patience," said Bush during his dedication speech to an audience of more than 160,000. "Now the work is done, and it is a fitting tribute, open and expansive, like America; grand and enduring, like the achievements we honor... On this day, in their honor, we will raise the American flag over a monument that will stand as long as America itself."

The memorial has 56 17-foot high granite pillars which represent 48 states, seven territories and the District of Columbia - the United States at the time of the war. Bronze oak and wheat wreaths hang from each pillar to symbolize the industrial and agricultural strength of the nation. A bronze rope connects the pillars to represent unity. The Rainbow



Retired Chief Master Sgt. Warren J. Toogood, visited the World War II Memorial in Washington May 11. The memorial is nestled between the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument on the National Mall. *Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Jim Varhegyi*

Pool sits in the middle. The north and south entrances each have bronze eagles which hold laurels. They represent victory. On one end is the Freedom Wall. On it are 4,000 gold stars to represent the 400,000 Americans who gave the ultimate sacrifice during the war. Panels around the memorial contain sculptures of Americans during the war. Finally, quotes about the war and the nation during that time are inscribed on walls throughout the memorial.

The World War II Memorial has been in the works for 11 years. In 1993 President Bill Clinton signed a law authorizing the building of the monument.

"It does honor not only to those who were killed, but to those who served," said Esslinger.

Marines push, pull, sweat through field meet

MALS-11 Marines bring on the competition, fun with magic tricks, pushups, humvee pulls

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

“Sir, was your card the seven of spades?” guessed Lance Cpl. Tomas B. Delacruz while other Marines gathered around the New York native in awe of the

enchanting trick.
The supply accounting clerk entertained Marines with his magic tricks at the Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 field meet May 27 at Mills Park.
“This is a big event established to build camaraderie. It brings everyone closer together during wartime. We’re

just doing our part to boost morale,” explained Gunnery Sgt. James B. Allen, substance abuse control officer.
To kick off the fun-filled field meet, Lt. Col. Shaugnessy A. Reynolds, commanding officer, MALS-11, gave a motivating speech to the “Devil Fish.”
“You have an opportunity today to fire it up!”

The Cape Girardeau, Miss., native then got into the legendary pushup position and led the Marines and Sailors in 20 four-count Marine Corps pushups.

“We came out to encourage physical fitness and increase unity. It’s about esprit de corps and getting out and having a competition,” said Shaugnessy.

Four teams competed against one another in each of the events, and the winner was presented a commander’s cup.

The first event required cooperation, stamina and heart from each “Devil Fish” in the humvee pull. A team of approximately eight Marines worked together to defeat the other team by pulling their humvee across the finish line first.

“It definitely takes teamwork to win this event,” mentioned Lance Cpl. Lawrence A. Hamilton, calibration technician.

The Beckley, W. Va., native added that, “These events are fun, especially if you participate.”

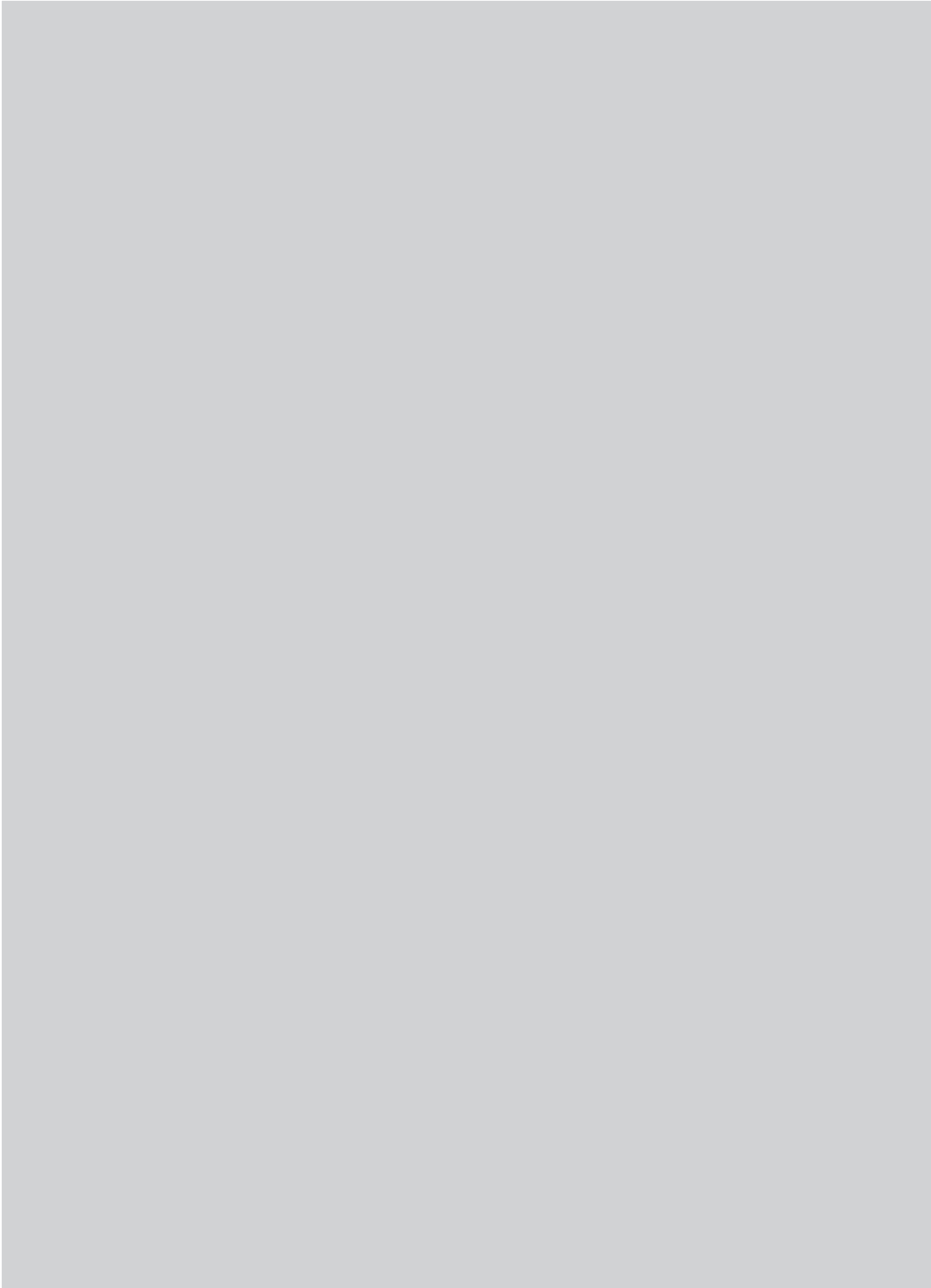
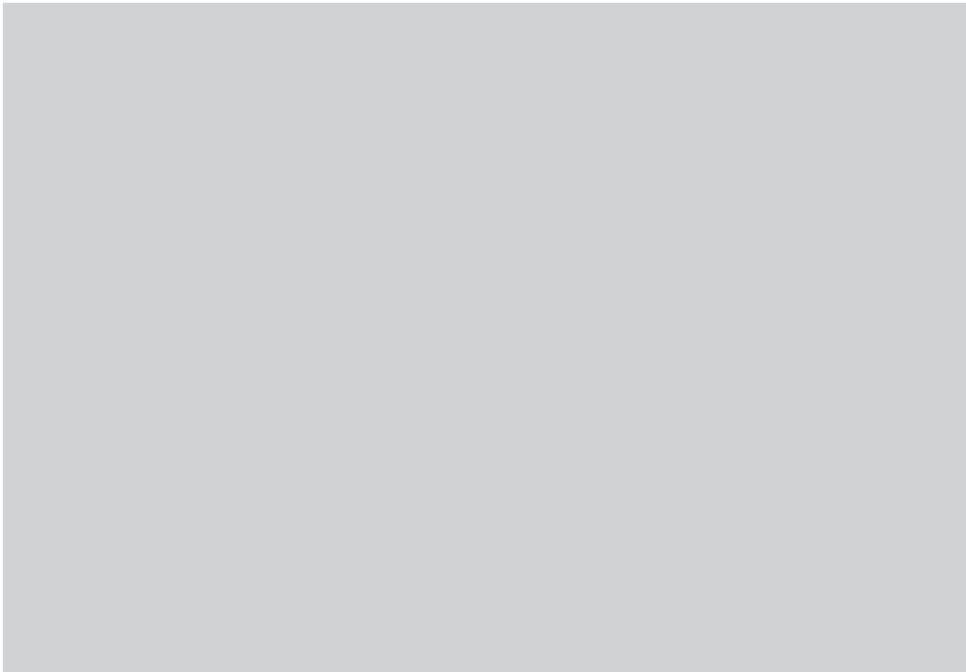
The “Devil Fish” also took part in events such as squad pushups, pull-ups, dizzy-izzy, bomb toss, fireman’s carry, stretcher carry, bulldog pull and field striping an M16-A2 service rifle in the fastest amount of time.

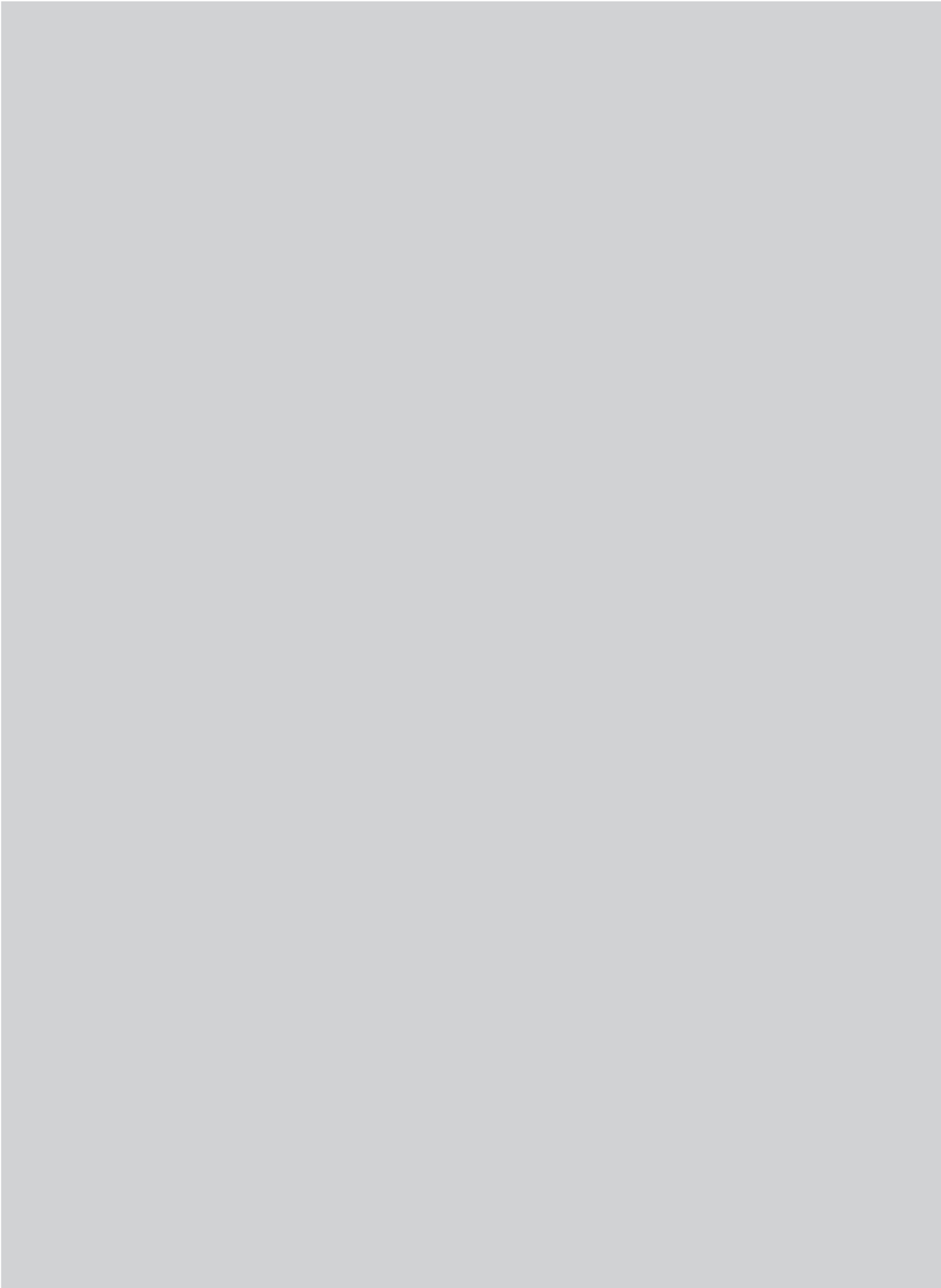
According to Delacruz, these competitions are an excellent way to improve unit moral.

“You might work 10 feet away from each other, but here you get to know everyone. It’s just an event to have some fun at,” he said.



ABOVE: Marines with MALS-11 try with all their might to win during a humvee pull competition. BELOW: Marines from MALS-11 do pushups during a squadron field meet. *Photos by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones*





Marines baptized in Iraqi desert

Story by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III

MWHS-3 Combat Correspondent

AL ASAD, Iraq - God, country and Corps is an age-old motto used since the birth of the Marine Corps nearly 229 years ago.

That saying held true recently when four Marines and one soldier were baptized here May 30 by two chaplains of different denominations during a baptism ceremony.

The event was triggered when Navy Lt. Alan W. Lenz, chaplain, Combat Service Support Battalion 7, Combat Service Support Group 11, 1st Force Service Support Group, was approached by several servicemembers who were attending his weekly church services about the possibility of being baptized in Iraq.

“Baptism is an outward symbol of the inward reality of a person’s relationship with their savior,” said the 44-year-old Vista, Calif., native. “It is also a public identification with others who have followed Jesus Christ by faith.”

More than 50 fellow worshippers viewed the expression of faith of the five servicemembers who were submerged into the baptismal waters.

Lance Cpl. Michael K. Kono, a 19-year-old network administrator, Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38, Marine Air Control Group 38, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, was baptized by Lenz after he expressed interest in following in the footsteps of his redeemer.

“I felt that being out here has brought me closer to the Lord,” said the Sparks, Nev., native. “I received an e-mail about the opportunity to be baptized in Iraq and have always wanted to be (baptized). This felt like it was the right time for me.”

Another Marine who was baptized was Lt. Col. David M. Wargo, assistant chief of staff for intelligence, 3rd MAW, and Pittsburgh native.

Until tragedy struck his family, Wargo revealed that he never knew the effect God could have on someone.

“I realized God was calling me to redemption in 1988 when my father died,” he said. “Before then, I knew God, but I did not truly know him. I relied on myself to ‘make it’, and I wanted to prove to everyone and to myself that I could succeed no matter what came my way.

“I lived my life just like my dad in many ways,” he



Navy Lt. Mike E Michener, chaplain, MWSS-273, submerges Lt. Col. david M. Wargo, assistant chief of staff for intelligence, 3rd MAW, into baptismal water at Al Asad, Iraq, May 30. Photo by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III

said. “By God’s grace, my dad accepted Christ before he died, and it was my dad’s death that started my walk with God.”

Staff Sgt. Michael C. Greenfield, motor transportation maintenance chief, Marine Wing Support Squadron 273, Marine Wing Support Group 37, 3rd MAW, believes he made the change of his life when he entered into a covenant with God.

“I believe in my heart that this was the second step in my life to come closer to God,” said the 27-year-old Hornell, N.Y., native. “I think about how I was baptized in the region where (Christianity) all began, and it makes it that much more meaningful to me. I also had my fellow (staff noncommissioned officers) out there supporting me.”

Lenz added that as a chaplain, the responsibility to baptize extends beyond the realm of moral service to the servicemembers in his unit; it is a direct representation of his desire to serve God.

“Being baptized has everything to do with wanting to be obedient,” he said.

He also said that the Iraqi people would eventually have a taste of what it is like to worship according to your own beliefs.

“We take individual freedoms very seriously in (America), and freedom to worship is one of the reasons our country was founded,” Lenz said. “Eventually, the Iraqi people will have the chance to demonstrate that same freedom.”

HONORS, continued from page 1

joint-service honor guard assigned to carry the president’s casket, said he was humbled to be in the ceremony.

“It’s an honor to be doing this for a great president,” added the New Brunswick, Canada native.

A military honor guard will fire a traditional 21-gun salute at noon today on all U.S. military bases. Also as part of honors owed to a previous president upon his death, all U.S. flags flown on government installations will be flown at half-staff for 30 days from the date of death.

MIDWAY, continued from page 2

In response, the island garrison built up its defenses, and U.S. carriers were scrambled to defend the small island of Midway and its garrison of Sailors and Marines. From June 4 to 7, 1942, American sea and air power engaged and sank all four of the Japanese carriers along with several other surface ships.

In comparison, American losses were not as great, although the carrier *USS Yorktown* was lost after numerous torpedo hits.

At Midway Japan ultimately lost more than 100 veteran pilots and aircrew that could not be replaced. The loss of this force also delivered a serious blow to Japanese morale and their ability to wage war in the Pacific. Aiding in Midway’s defense were U.S. Marines, including Marine aviators of Marine Aircraft Group 22 who paid a high price for victory with more than 100 casualties.

During the battle, MAG-22 destroyed more than 40 Japanese dive-bombers and fighter aircraft, with the 6th Defense Battalion on the ground shooting down more than 10 Japanese planes as well.

Just as during the defense of Wake Island, Marine air and ground forces worked together at Midway to help defend against Japanese attack. After the battle, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commander-in-chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, commended the Marines for their gallant efforts and thanked them for their sacrifices at Midway.

Nimitz further noted that the Marines were ready to take on vastly superior numbers and were an important, contributing force in the spearhead of victory.

With the Japanese threat in the Pacific largely blunted, much hard work was still left to do.

There would be other Pacific islands, like Tarawa and Iwo Jima, to defend and reclaim from Japan, further demonstrating the skill and courage of resolve of American and allied forces.

Feature

REAGAN, continued from page 4

national sense of pride and rebuild the conditions for economic prosperity. Reagan cared deeply about America and its people.

On the anniversary of D-Day, President Reagan delivered an historic address to the heroes who fought there 40 years ago. In it, he told a story about a young Army private who made a commitment in a letter to visit the beaches of Normandy after that victorious day. The young soldier never made it; but his daughter did.

In her father’s place, she would plant an American flag in rows of white crosses. She would stand inside the sunken concrete bunkers and she would walk the beach on his behalf.

Reagan told that story through his own tears because he believed in the goodness of the American people, whether they were heroic veterans or proud daughters of those who fought so many years ago. He loved his country and the people who made it.

A man of contagious optimism and verve for life, Reagan disarmed opponents with humor and endeared supporters with his candid self-perception. During a debate against Walter Mondale, 70-year-old candidate Reagan leveled with the audience: “I will not make age an issues in my campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent’s youth and inexperience.” The entire audience

erupted in laughter, including his respected opponent. Reagan could laugh at himself because he was comfortable in his own skin and was driven by his sense of purpose.

To President Reagan, America was a shining city on a hill, a land of hope and optimism. Freedom Man could enter at its gates, because America was truly a land of opportunity for all.

I was just a boy when President Reagan took the reigns and headed America in a new direction. In college, I studied President Reagan’s policies and his masterful ability to deliver those ideas. Following Reagan turned personal as I grew to admire a man who, through his example, became a mentor despite the fact that I was never able to meet him in person. I wish I had, but I didn’t need to.

In 1994, President Reagan publicly shared with us one last concern. He said, “Whatever else history may say about me when I’m gone, I hope it will record that I appealed to your best hopes, not your worst fears; to your confidence rather than your doubts.”

Mr. President, you gave us hope, and defeated our fears. Because of you and in spite of those who wish us harm, we continue to be a shining city on a hill. Thank you for loving our country so much that your unwavering optimism restored our national sense of pride. You were our living example of an American patriot.

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“We are receiving good training here, it shows a lot of our green side. If you ever end up in a comprising situation, you can revert back to these moves and use them to your advantage,” explained Cpl. Dave A. Armas, aviation electrician, MALS-16.

The Bakersfield, Calif., native added, “This grappling and other physical and mental training is instilling us with confidence.”

The Marines also received professional military education in addition to their physical training.

“In between the training, the Marines would

receive guided discussions that would tie into the techniques or class being taught. We did a warrior study where the Marines would re-search information on a Medal of Honor recipient and share their research with the rest of the class. In addition, the Marines also receive martial culture studies where they would learn about the history of where the fighting techniques that they had learned, came from,” said Cantrell, a Nashville Tenn., native.

The Marine Corps Martial Arts Program is and will continue to make Marines more proficient warriors with each belt.

“We’re not only teaching Marines fighting techniques, we’re instilling them with discipline, confidence and character,” said Cantrell.

Religious Services

The Chaplain's Office is located in building 5632 and coordinates regularly-scheduled worship services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities contact the Chaplain's Office at 577-1333.

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Protestant worship service

11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist

7 p.m. Contemporary worship service

Tuesday:

7:30 p.m. Gospel service

Wednesday:

11:30 a.m. Wednesday's with God

Monday-Friday:

11:30 a.m. Mass

Changes of Command

MALS-11:

Lt. Col. Shaugnessy Reynolds will relinquish Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 to Lt. Col. Daniel J. Gillan in a change of command ceremony July 9.

VMFA(AW)-121:

Lt. Col. Matt Shihaden will relinquish Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 121 to Lt. Col. Frank A. Richie in a change of command ceremony June 25.

3-on-3 basketball

Earn points for the 101 Days of Summer by participating in the 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament. Games will be held from July 19-23 at the Semper Fit Center gymnasium from 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. Entry fee is \$20 per team and \$2 per person interested in participating in the Slam Dunk and Drug-Free Throw contests. Sign-up deadline is July 14. For more info contact Alisa Hertzler at 577-6283.

Flight Jacket survey

The Flight Jacket is currently holding a reader survey to better serve our readers. The survey will allow readers to express what they would like to see more or less of in the paper, delivery options and other areas of concern.

The survey can be taken online at www.miramar.usmc.mil/miramar/pao_fjsurvey.htm.

It can also be accessed through the hyperlink

under the online version of the Flight Jacket at <http://www.miramar.usmc.mil>. A paper copy is also available at the Public Affairs Office in building 2257. For more information call the Public Affairs Office at 577-6000.

Postal overload

Remember to check your military mail box daily and to check out with the post office when going on leave or TAD for 15 or more days at a time.



Farewell to the chief

Members of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band play "Amazing Grace" as the 600-pound casket bearing President Ronald Reagan is placed onto a twin Air Force One Wednesday at Naval Base Ventura County, Pt. Mugu, Calif. From here the president's body was transported to Washington until his funeral at the Washington National Cathedral today. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones*

CHANCE,
continued from page 4

side and saluted as the conveyor moved Chance to the aircraft. I was relieved when he was finally settled into place.

The rest of the bags were loaded, and I watched them shut the cargo bay door before heading back up to board the aircraft. One of the pilots had taken my carry-on bag himself and had it stored next to the cockpit door so he could watch it while I was on the tarmac. As I boarded the plane, I could tell immediately that the flight attendants had already been informed of my mission. They seemed a little choked up as they led me to my seat.

When we landed in Minneapolis, I was the first one off the plane. The pilot himself escorted me straight down the side stairs of the exit tunnel to the tarmac. The cargo crew there already knew what was on this plane. They were unloading some of the luggage when an Army sergeant, a fellow escort who had left Dover earlier that day, appeared next to me. His “cargo” was going to be loaded onto my plane for its continuing leg. I waited with the soldier and we saluted together as his fallen

comrade was loaded onto the plane.

Before leaving the airport, I had told the cargo crew that I wanted to come back to the cargo area in the morning rather than go straight to the passenger terminal. I felt bad for leaving Chance overnight and wanted to see the shipping container where I had left it for the night. It was fine.

I was met again by a man from the cargo crew and escorted down to the tarmac. The pilot of the plane joined me as I waited for them to bring Chance from the cargo area. The pilot and I talked of his service in the Air Force and how he missed it.

I saluted as Chance was moved up the conveyor and onto the plane. It was to be a while before the luggage was to be loaded so the pilot took me up to the board the plane where I could watch the tarmac from a window. With no other passengers yet on board, I talked with the flight attendants and one of the cargo guys. He had been in the Navy and one of the attendants had been in the Air Force. Everywhere I went, people were continuing to tell me their relationship to the military. After all the baggage was aboard, I went back down to the tarmac, inspected the cargo bay, and watched

them secure the door.

When we arrived at Billings, I was again the first off the plane. The funeral director had driven five hours up from Riverton, Wyo., to meet us. He shook my hand as if I had personally lost a brother.

We moved Chance to a secluded cargo area. Now it was time for me to remove the shipping container and drape the flag over the casket. I had predicted that this would choke me up but I found I was more concerned with proper flag etiquette than the solemnity of the moment. Once the flag was in place, I stood by and saluted as Chance was loaded onto the van from the funeral home. I picked up my rental car and followed Chance for five hours until we reached Riverton. During the long trip I imagined how my meeting with Chance’s parents would go. I was very nervous about that.

When we finally arrived at the funeral home, I had my first face-to-face meeting with the casualty assistance call officer. It had been his duty to inform the family of Chance’s death.

Inside I gave the funeral director some of the paperwork from Dover and discussed the plan for the next day. The service was to be in the high school

gymnasium up in Dubois, population about 900, some 90 miles away. Eventually, we had covered everything. The CACO had some items that the family wanted to be inserted into the casket, and I felt I needed to inspect Chance’s uniform to ensure everything was proper. Although it was going to be a closed casket funeral, I still wanted to ensure his uniform was squared away.

Earlier in the day I wasn’t sure how I’d handle this moment. Suddenly, the casket was open, and I got my first look at Chance Phelps. His uniform was immaculate - a tribute to the professionalism of the Marines at Dover. I noticed that he wore six ribbons over his marksmanship badge; the senior one was his Purple Heart. I had been in the Corps for over 17 years, including a combat tour, and was wearing eight ribbons. This private first class, with less than a year in the Corps, had already earned six.

The next morning, I wore my dress blues and followed the hearse for the trip up to Dubois. This was the most difficult leg of our trip for me. I was bracing for the moment when I would meet his parents and hoping I would find the right words as I presented them with Chance’s personal effects.